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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SARAJEVO 002487

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

EUR FOR DICARLO, EUR/SCE (FOOKS, STINCHCOMB); NSC FOR  
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SUBJECT: BOSNIA--SECURITY MINISTER ON SPIRIC RESIGNATION  
AND SIPA DIRECTOR SELECTION

REF: SARAJEVO 2370

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Classified By: Ambassador Charles English for reasons 1.4(b), (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: During a November 13 meeting, the Ambassador and Minister of Security Tarik Sadovic discussed the work of the Council of Ministers (CoM) in technical mandate and the selection process for the director of the State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA). Sadovic blames Serbian and Republika Srpska (RS) politicians for stoking political tensions by linking the RS with Kosovo status and fears Bosnia may be entering a period of prolonged crisis. The Ambassador urged Sadovic to play a constructive role in the CoM in technical mandate to keep the government functioning. Sadovic pledged to do his part including stepping into the role of Chairman if needed. The Ambassador encouraged Sadovic to use professional competency instead of ethnicity as the basis for selecting the next director of SIPA. END SUMMARY

Crisis and the Council of Ministers  
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12. (C) The Ambassador, on November 13, met with Tarik Sadovic, Bosnia-Herzegovina Minister of Security. Sadovic is a Bosniak and a member of the SDA. Sadovic said he had no doubt that leaders in Serbia and the Republika Srpska collaborated to provoke the current political crisis by linking the RS and Kosovo Status talks just prior to the UNSC debate on renewing the EUFOR mandate and the December conclusion of Kosovo Status talks. Sadovic said he feared RS political leaders could call for an RS referendum on secession should Kosovo be granted independence. Sadovic fears Bosnia may be entering an extended period of crisis which could affect many spheres including security. Sadovic told us he has urged his colleagues of all nationalities in security agencies to resist any political pressure to leave their posts. Sadovic urged the USG to remind RS political leaders that calling for such an unconstitutional referendum is illegal and punishable by law. The Ambassador noted to Sadovic that the USG was equally concerned by anti-Dayton rhetoric by Bosniak political leaders in calling for the abolition of the entity structures and in particular the RS. (Note: In a press release issued by the Ministry following the session, Sadovic's anti-referendum statement was highlighted while the Ambassador's criticism of Bosniak

political leaders was omitted. The Ambassador used a subsequent run-in with Sadovic to complain about the omission. End Note.)

13. (C) Following the Presidency's acceptance of CoM Chairman Nikola Spiric's resignation (reftel), the Presidency must recommend a new CoM Chairman who will then propose a new government to Parliament for approval. Sadovic was concerned that SNSD leader Milorad Dodik will use his party's numerous seats in Parliament to block the approval of a new government in order to show the international community that Dodik holds the keys to the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Ambassador reminded Sadovic, that especially in any prolonged absence of a new government, it is imperative Sadovic play a constructive role in the functioning of the CoM in technical mandate. Sadovic agreed that the CoM can and should continue to function and hoped the U.S. would pressure Spiric to remain as CoM chair until a new government is announced. Sadovic said that as deputy Chairman he could step in for Spiric, but would prefer not to, fearing that Serb ministers would walk out or to give the impression that Bosniaks were trying to dominate. However, if he had to, he would choose Bosnia over Spiric and step in as chairman.

#### SIPA Selection Process -----

14. (C) The Ambassador asked for an update in the selection process for SIPA Director and reminded Sadovic that professionalism, competency, and management skills rather than ethnicity should guide the selection process. Sadovic acknowledged U.S. political and material support in the creation of SIPA and related that the Selection Panel will interview 4-5 candidates on December 4. (septel). Sadovic claims he wants a "decisive and courageous" Director committed to fight crime, but one who would be professionally

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compatible with Sadovic himself. Sadovic added, that in his opinion the next SIPA Director should be an ethnic Bosniak, in order to maintain ethnic balance in the law enforcement agencies under the Ministry of Security. However, asserting that he will not attempt to influence the outcome of the selection process, Sadovic said he created a multi-ethnic selection panel and asked them to strictly follow the legal selection procedures and to recommend the best candidate. The Ambassador again stressed competency over ethnicity in the selection process, pointing to the opportunity given the Ministry of Security to set an example for the rest of BiH's structures.  
ENGLISH